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SECURITY INFORMATION

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Vietnam
SUBJECT Health and Sanitation Data

25X1A2g

REPORT NO.

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(BY SOURCE) - - - -

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- 25X1X6
1. The population of Saigon was over 1½ million in 1953, but one must remember that it has two distinct parts: one of which is Vietnamese and European with an organized health program and the other, Cholon, the Chinese community, 25X1X6
 2. Local endemic diseases can be listed in the following descending order: amoebic dysentery, bacillary dysentery, TB, malaria, leprosy, typhoid fever, smallpox, trachoma, and plague.
 3. The inadequate public water system of Saigon consists of deep public wells, treated by filtration and chlorination. Water is distributed throughout the city by pipes with very low pressure. Most citizens have storage tanks on the roof, which are pumped full once or twice daily. The water supply, which serves 90 percent of the population, is tested daily by representatives from the Pasteur Institute. The water is generally safe to use without boiling except in those areas where old pipes no longer protect the sanitary condition of the water. Ships are supplied by the public supply. Bottled water is used extensively because of the French tradition.
 4. There is a limited supply of milk in Saigon, of which 90 percent is bottled and 90 percent is pasteurized. 25X1X6 many of the dairy cattle are tuberculin tested. There is no official agency in control of the sanitary quality of the milk.
 5. Seventy-five percent of the population is served by an operating sanitary sewerage system which disposes sewerage into the river. The rest of the population utilizes human excreta for fertilization of land used to grow vegetables. There is no drainage adequate to carry surface run-off. There are storm sewers and open ditches, and there are places near the city where surface water collects and stands after a heavy rain.

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6. Garbage collection occurs two or three times weekly. Refuse is collected. The ultimate disposal of garbage is taken care of by scavengers and animals. The dead are both buried and cremated. There are organized control methods over mosquitoes, lice, rodents, and fleas, with the exception that rat control is most haphazard.
7. There are seven hospitals in Saigon with approximately 2,500 beds, two thousand of which are charity beds. All medical services and common drugs are available. There is no real active health and welfare administration, but this is replaced by the work of the Pasteur Institute. Many health practices reportedly carried on before the current war are only existing today to a limited extent because of the current conflict. Most hospital beds are occupied by war wounded, and large portions of the existing facilities have been taken over by the military authorities.

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